PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

The Christian Century PULPIT

A Periodical of Contemporary Preaching

CHARLES CLAYTON MORRISON, *Editor*

VOLUME VII | CHICAGO, JANUARY, 1936 | NUMBER 1

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The Lift of a Far View

BY ALBERT W. BEAVEN

Who was made . . . after the power of an endless life. Hebrews 7:16.

IN the midst of a discussion in the epistle to the Hebrews dealing with Jewish law and history, and expounding the place of technical matters such as tithes and altars, appears this intriguing but tremendously dynamic description of Jesus: "Who was made . . . after the power of an endless life." It is as though one were moving through a room filled with antique statuary, and came of a sudden upon a virile and powerful personality at work, one who explained it all.

Jesus is introduced to us, in this text, with his authority and importance depending neither upon the temporary framework of law, nor upon the ordinances and customs of the Jewish system out of which he came, but as explained alone by the eternally vital principle of life, based upon God's reality and power. "He was made," says the text, "after the power of an endless life." I have always liked that phrase. It seems to take the whole matter of Jesus' personality out of the formal and artificial, and to put it into line with living, ongoing, cosmic force behind the universe. We see him in a long perspective, and by so doing find the key to his power.

How splendidly those words describe Jesus! We are all fascinated by life. It is a miracle which always holds our attention. Life exists by so narrow a margin on this planet. It walks a narrow path between destruction on the one side by cold and on the other side by heat, forever on the edge of extinction yet always clung to with such powerful tenacity that its seemingly endless successions of generations stretch away toward the long future. We not only cling to it, but seek to understand it, to wrest from it its secrets, to live it to the full; this is the supreme objective of humanity. Among those who have understood it and grasped the secrets of its power, no one seems to have equaled Jesus Christ.

Again, when we try to learn the art of mastering it,

25 Cents a Copy | Entered as second-class matter October 14, 1929, at Post Office at Chicago, Ill., under the act of March 3, 1879. Published monthly by The Christian Century Press, 440 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill. | Two Dollars a Year

1936-38

desire to know how to live it so as to bring into it the deepest satisfaction, and to extract from it the greatest reward; when we seek to learn the scale of values by which we are to determine what is really most worth while in it, how to restrain our wayward and lower powers so that the higher and more splendid faculties within us can come to their finest development, no one seems to have done it as did Jesus. In the short months or years that he moved among the children of men as an avowed leader he seems to have crowded into the days so much of insight into life, to have illuminated its dark places so extensively, to have found the secret of its deepest resources in God so completely, to have brought his purpose and will so thoroughly in line with the eternal forces back of the universe, that his brief life has become the measuring-stick by which the greater portion of the people who live measure their highest achievement. The manner in which he did it seems to be hinted at in the text. He lived "after the power of an endless life." The great forces of eternal and ongoing life flowed through him on to the future. He lived by the lift of a far view.

THE SECRET OF JESUS

Many scholars of our day have been determined to get him located in his exact setting historically, politically, sociologically, psychologically and theologically. We have striven with painstaking and commendable accuracy to secure for ourselves a clear idea of his background, to know what the people of his time thought and what the ideas were with which he approached life, also to fix the dates and the other elements of his environment with precision. Slowly, like a sculptor cutting away the marble to uncover the figure imprisoned within the block, historians and scholars have attempted to allow Jesus to stand forth a true and accurate historical figure.

No one can lessen the importance of this quest. As a part of a general program it has its place and it has rendered us a great service. I think, however, that even those who are most deeply interested in that part of the inquiry are conscious that, even when that piece of work is done perfectly, it has not touched the secret of the thing which made Jesus what he was and is. Suppose that we knew the exact historical environment in which he and others then lived, that same environment did not do much to ennoble Pilate or immortalize Josephus. Suppose that we could describe accurately the eschatology which in his time was generally accepted, even that eschatology did little to lift Caiaphas or Judas into goodness or greatness. Suppose we could finally settle the last detail of the history of his death, his burial and his resurrection, certainly those were not the facts which electrified and empowered those who were nearest to him.

JESUS' SPECIALTY WAS LIFE

It was not the physical, it was not the historical, it was not the legal, political or sociological features, which differentiated him from everyone else; it was the marvelous incorporation within his personality of the abounding and endless principle of life which we believe is at the heart of all things. He was a specialist on life. He was its embodiment, its champion. He was called "the son of man," because he seemed to have within him the most perfect exemplification of all the highest and finest that life holds for us here. He was called "the son of God" because it seemed as if the Eternal Being who was the inventor and giver of life, the author of immortality, was expressing his purpose in him. Eternal life was already at work before their eyes in Jesus.

The will of that God seemed to be his will. When people were near him they felt that they were in the presence of that God. When they followed him they felt the thrill of the cause of that God. Even in the dire moments of his suffering on the cross there was a haunting consciousness, even within those who were his executioners, that surely this man had something about him which differentiated him from all others they knew, a force that was beyond their power to kill.

DOCTRINES ABOUT JESUS

People found it difficult then, as they have found it difficult ever since, to put him in as an ordinary part of a local picture, or to tie him into a temporary framework. Something was in him which was elusive and ongoing.

To me, the various doctrines which have attempted to explain the person of Jesus have never been so important because I thought of them as adequate, scientific descriptions of historical situations, as they have been important because they were indications of a great reality which lay back of these greatest attempts which men could make, by their minds, to grasp this great reality and to put it into words. How incompletely those words have at times expressed it; how, as men have come to understand him better, the older sets of words have seemed passé and partial, is all brought out in our study of the history of dogma and theology. One no sooner contemplates the mysteries included in the person of Jesus than one begins to feel immediately that no words he can command are big enough to hold the feelings and emotions that he has in that presence. Man uses his intellect, at its best, only to find it impossible to crowd into a statement, or a set of dogmas, the great realities, the force, the dynamic element, in Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus eludes the dogmas; he is bigger than our intellectual pigeon-holes; he marches on, growing, changing, in the same sense that life is growing and changing. While in one sense he is "the same yesterday, today and forever," in another sense he is new and vital and contemporary. There is nothing static about him; he is no perfect marble statue, like Venus de Milo standing at the end of a long corridor in time; he is no perfect moral code carved upon some tablet and hid in some museum. Just as the text said, he was made "after the power of an endless life." Even in death, he was more alive and vital than other people are in life.

Others besides the author of the book of Hebrews emphasized this same element. When we open the pages of the Gospel of John we soon come upon another phrase: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." This writer too feels that the "life" quality is one of the most remarkably unique things about Jesus. Some do not accept the fourth gospel as history. "He is

bending facts to prove a point," they say. But let us not demand that the book be something which it is not. We do not have to read far before realizing that what we are perusing here does not pretend to be a historical description of the elements in the environment of Jesus. The book is unquestionably an interpretation; it is also great poetry. It is, however, the result of the insights of a soul—and a great soul at that—attempting to understand this personality. To say that it is not exact history is not at all to say that it does not disclose reality. Poetry does not necessarily pretend to be history, neither does art; but it does understand and disclose reality.

There are plenty of areas in life where one needs to have the faculty of the intellect supplemented by the

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faculty of appreciation. This is true in all the higher areas of our experience, but it is eminently true in the area of personality. No biographer paints an accurate picture of a person merely because he sets down the facts. He needs also a sympathetic interpretation of the inner soul of the other personality. There are those who would discount much that Paul says and much that John says, because it seems to be an interpretation, an expression of a deep enthusiasm growing out of devotion and love. But let us ask ourselves how completely any personality is passed along in literature unless he has, in addition to those who give the cold facts about him, someone who gives an interpretation based upon insight. That interpretation has value, and we judge its importance partly by the ability of the interpreter, partly by the evident reality of his understanding of the deeper things in the other personality, and partly by the willingness of the interpreter to be conquered by and be loyal to the great external objectives by which the one being described was mastered. No one could write a really adequate biography of Walter Rauschenbusch who could not sympathize with and yield to the great ideals for which he gave his life. Enthusiastic loyalty may, on occasion, blind one to facts, but without it one never sees far into another person's inner life.

WHENCE JESUS' POWER?

Among the greatest of Jesus' interpreters undoubtedly were these two, the writer of John's Gospel and the Apostle to the Gentiles. In their writings one comes upon their explanations of the overmastering power of Jesus. It is interesting to note how frequently their doctrines are attempts to explain this quality in the Master to which the text refers. The doctrines of the pre-existence of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, the living and continuously contemporary Christ, are examples of what we mean. They describe him as moving in a wide orbit. "Knowing that he came forth from God, and goeth unto God," writes John. "It was impossible that he should be holden of death," says Peter. "Christ in you, the hope of glory," says Paul. Are we to come to these and other like phrases, asking only: "Are they exact, complete, scientific descriptions of a set of physical facts?" I think not, for more important than these words is the reality back of them in the personality of Jesus, which so gripped these men who were near to him that these explanations seemed the way to put it in words. Doctrines are secondary; the reality they attempt to express is primary.

These writers, standing next to and mastered by the magnetic and powerful personality of Jesus, felt, as the text says, that he "was made . . . after the power of an endless life." They could not explain his tremendous accumulation of living and vital power, without assuming that his life reached back and tapped the eternal resources of the God of all life. Out of that grew their concept of the pre-existence of Jesus. If one does not accept their words, he, like them, is left to explain that element in Jesus which their words attempt to describe. Something about him seemed to be linked to the far and endless past.

JESUS LIVES!

Take, again, their words about his rising from the dead. They could not explain what they had experienced after this resurrection without trying to describe how they had been caught up on a rushing spiritual current which proved so powerful that it was impossible to conceive how the one who caused it could be holden of death. Death does not do to men the things that had been done to him and to them. They had seen him crucified, to be sure, but as a matter of reality and personal experience that endless life did break forth—like a spring which, dammed up in one place, breaks forth in another. It was impossible for him to be holden of death; and the touch and the thrill of that personality this side of the grave was even more powerful than it was on the other. While the debate went on as to what the exact facts were, that "endless life" flowed across

the barriers of locality, of a cross, of death, of a tomb, of the restraints of the Jewish hierarchy and the Roman power, and spread itself out across the world, changing lives, electrifying all whom it touched. Whatever the theories about the matter in terms of explanation, in terms of reality there it was: a fact of experience. It is so today.

JESUS THEN AND NOW

Take the concept of the living Christ, as they worded it or as we know it now. In what sense is he living? No one can ignore the metaphysical problems involved. These undoubtedly will be discussed until the end of time. But the great reality is that people get the same experience of God when they come near to this matchless personality now that they did then. He has the same effect upon them now as he did then. He shames them out of their smallness; he calls them to the noble and heroic; he inspires within them all that is fine and pure. Like the white captain of the hosts of goodness he strides across the centuries. He affects us as one living "after the power of an endless life."

These seem to me to be the realities that are back of the person of Jesus. He still lives "after the power of an endless life," and it is this far view in him and of him which enables us to explain him more completely than when we lose ourselves in the meticulous discussion of any specific set of physical facts, and let them, when found, stand unrelated to this longer vision. We need to consider the far view if we are to understand the near one.

Not only, however, is it true that Jesus was himself lifted by the far view, and that we can understand him better when we interpret him as did these early writers, in the light of a far view of his work and his personality; but it is also true that we, as ministers of the cause of Jesus Christ, can capitalize this same principle in our work and feel here the lift of the far view. We can take each piece of work in which we are engaged and give it larger meaning, but putting it against the perspective of the far view.

MINISTERS AND THE FAR VIEW

If a minister thinks of himself simply as a worker in a lone parish, the discouragement and the heartbreak of it all can easily overwhelm him. If he admits to himself that he is the servant merely of one group, he grows narrow, parochial, competitive in his relationship to his fellow ministers, and leads his people not into the large things of the Kingdom, but into the small things of a sect or a party. Every minister of a local church must continually be lifting his task up into the greatness that belongs to it when it becomes part of the great enterprise of the Kingdom. Just as a man bending over a pattern in a mosaic, fitting tiny pieces of stone of different colors into some small figure, gets his real inspiration by taking his eyes from it at times and seeing the large sketch of the whole picture on which he is working; so it is with the minister, he must get the lift of the far view.

This holds not only for his local parish, but for the whole enterprise. The vision which we call the Kingdom of God, the bringing of God's will upon earth, the achieving the results that we want in the midst of mankind—these things cannot be understood unless they are put against the far view. The battle frequently goes against a man; he works hard, yet finds his plans crashing about his head; he preaches certain ideals, yet sees the crowd turn against them, and they become the views of only a minority. At times he has to stand all alone, upholding the ideals which he had proclaimed. If he gets no far view, he will die then and there, brokenhearted. But if he does, he may be like the heroes in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, of whom it is said: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar." Had these men judged everything and measured their work by the period of persecution in which they lived, so graphically described in that same chapter, they would have seemed as great failures to themselves and to others as Jesus seemed to some when on his cross. But in the light of the far view they gained hope, and in that far view we judge them to be infinitely more important than those who beat them down and sawed them asunder.

IN A GREAT PROCESSION

Hammurabi was a great king and a man of tremendous power in the ancient civilization out of which Abraham went, but it is Abraham, not Hammurabi—the man who left, not the man who stayed; the man who, to those in that country, seemingly failed, instead of the king, who seemingly remained in power—who has lived down through the ages and whose faith has been a stimulus to millions. The power of Egypt rose and registered itself in gigantic works and physical monuments, but the intangible and seemingly unimportant words and teachings of Moses, whom Pharaoh rejected, have lived on, while the Nile-valley civilization has gone into eclipse. Rome, in all its vast power, came and went; but the humble Galilean, whom it crucified, lives on.

We cannot tell whether a thing is right or wrong by the crowd that follows it. The minister must stand, and act in the light of God's purpose, not by the plaudits of the contemporary group.

Into the midst of the somewhat bemired and soggy life of today, with its cynicism and doubt and dread, a minister goes. It is a thing of glory to be the preacher of a gospel that can proclaim to people that they can, if they will, live after the power of an endless life, and feel the thrill of a faith which reaches across time and strikes hands with the God of eternity.

We are in a great procession; we work in a cause that moves across the generations; we are empowered by a force that is as resistless as "endless life"; why should we not feel the lift of the far view?

The deepest difference, I think, between people lies in the fact that some make it easy for all who know them to be at their best and some make it hard. May God search the consciences of some of us by that truth! The most ruinous thing that ever comes on earth is a personality with charm who makes badness attractive.

Harry Emerson Fosdick.

Beginning the Year With God

By Alfred E. Cooke

In the beginning God. Genesis 1:1.

HOW to begin? That is the question that faces everyone who would accomplish any task worth his while. The first leap from the starting-point usually determines the winner of the hundred-yard dash. The salesman knows that his line of approach to a possible customer means all the difference between a contract signed and a final failure to close the deal. How to begin the article or story. How to start the speech or begin the sermon is often more important, as well as more difficult, than how to finish. If the audience is not gripped in the first few minutes, many of them may not be there to listen to the peroration. The secret of success in many adventures is a good beginning. And how to make a success of the coming year, for many of us, will largely depend on how we begin it. Like a new and unexplored country it lies before us all unknown. What perils and dangers, or what joys and triumphs it may reveal, we cannot tell. What opportunities for progress, for usefulness and service to humanity; what new fields of endeavor, what possibilities of good or evil, what victories and defeats the new year may bring to us, not one of us knows.

But we can be certain that there will be many temptations awaiting us, times of testing and trial of soul. Some of us may meet with tragedy grim and terrifying; some of us may be plunged in disaster, and some of us may find a prosperity more dangerous than any impoverishment that could visit us. "The seeds of laughter and tears await the light of a new day about to dawn, and the sound of hurrying footsteps anticipates the entrance of a New Year already knocking at our doors."

How shall we begin? How enter the new year so full of possibilities, so mysterious, so pregnant with destiny for each of us? How shall we plan to make the year 1936 an abiding success?

I

In the first place, we must begin as the Book itself begins, and as creation began—with God. "In the beginning God." If the coming year is to have any real meaning or purpose, any worth or dignity; if it is to lead us to any goal worth while, to any loftier level of manhood or womanhood, then he who is the source of all life and the inspiration of all noble living—God—must stand with us on the very threshold of the year, and step out with us on its undiscovered highways. Life in these days is a more daring, more strenuous adventure than ever it was, and you and I need, as much and more than our fathers did, the presence of the Eternal Guide and Great Companion.

I know that there are certain writers of fiction who sneer at life as a kind of absurd farce, without real purpose or meaning. As one has said: "The fiction of today is a terrible picture of life without religion, of boredom and a kind of despair driving unsatisfied hearts into all manner of extravagances, feverishly seeking something that will fill the days and help them to forget, and keep them from thinking." And even some would-be philosophers assure us that life is "a stupendous bungle, crudely designed and clumsily constructed, a sad mistake, upon the whole, much better blotted out." Men like Bertrand Russell tell us it is only a story of despair ending in nothingness and defeat. "The individual soul," says he, "must struggle alone with what of courage it can command against the whole weight of a universe that cares nothing for its hopes and fears." And Professor Harry Elmer Barnes mocks at our foolish imaginings that man is of any consequence whatever in the infinite realms of this boundless universe. "Astronomically considered" man is of less than no account, a negligible speck of protoplasm lost in the infinite immensity of illimitable space. But, as Professor Coe retorts: "Astronomically considered, man is the astronomer!" And life which takes God into account is of infinite value and splendor. This earth on which we spend our few and strenuous years may be one of the least of all the planets, a mere speck of matter compared with the immensity of the blazing suns that wheel through boundless space, but since "in the beginning God" made man in his own image, the soul of the lowest man that walks this earth can wing its way among constellations and suns and stars and challenge the universe with the cry:

> I feel among these mighty things that, as I am,
> I am akin to God—
> A spirit nobler in its cause and end,
> More wonderful in plan, far greater in its powers
> Than all these swift and bright immensities.

You and I are sons of God, created for companionship with the Almighty, and, because of this, to start the new year without him is to get hopelessly off the track and lose the meaning of life, while to begin with him alongside of us is to dignify life and lift all our days to the high levels of the heavenly places. Begin the year with God and every day will be a thrilling adventure in the eternal realms of the Spirit, and every task and duty will be a definite cooperation with the Most High in the great work of establishing his kingdom here in this world. To be aware of God as we go about our daily toil, to feel his presence in the kitchen, in the office, the schoolroom, the workshop, and the social circle—that is to make life really worth while, to strip it of all meanness and dulness, and glorify it with the radiance of heaven. Professor Raleigh, in a glowing tribute, has said: "Everyone was more himself for being in the company of Shakespeare." But how much truer it is of God. When a man keeps company with God he "comes to himself," and develops his real being. All the infinite possibility latent in his soul flames into power and beauty, and he takes his rightful place as a son of the Eternal.

He who, like Enoch, walks with God will experience a perpetual growth and expansion of soul. He will constantly rise "on stepping-stones of his dead self to higher things." Dr. Ira Landrith once wrote an article with the title "Get Busy and Grow a Soul." They are multitudes today who are sorely in need of

that advice, but only those who begin the year with God, and keep step with him through the twelve months, will measure any bigger in soul at the end of the year than they are today. If 1936 is to be a year of spiritual growth for you, you must "in the beginning," and all the way through, have God for your Companion, Counselor and Guide.

II

Again, to begin the year with God will mean strength and courage for the tasks and struggle of the twelve months ahead.

On the last day of the year 1868 the historian, W. H. Lecky, wrote in his journal the prayer of the old Breton sailors: "Keep me, my God, for my boat is so small and Thy ocean so wide." And it is in the spirit of that prayer that you and I should face this new year. The expanse of the next twelve months is so wide and so deep, and our little boat is so small; the storms of trouble and sorrow are so great, the tides of opposition so strong, the shoals of temptation and reefs of danger so many, that you and I can never hope to make the harbor in safety unless the Great Pilot himself has hold of the helm. Some of you are already staggered by the problems that face you in the coming weeks. You do not know how you can solve them. You do not know to whom you can go for help or counsel. Others of you have serious business problems to meet, and you are afraid of everything going to pieces. Some of you have family troubles that are breaking your hearts in the silence; others are facing the struggle with broken health, finding yourselves increasingly unfit for the daily work. Still others are unknowingly hurrying toward the day of bitter bereavement, when the waters of death shall sweep into your homes and carry off your best beloved, and life will never be the same again. Every one of us will have to confront situations requiring the utmost wisdom and patience and strength. How then can we go forward without the God of all wisdom and strength to help us? How are we going to avoid the serious mistakes and blunders that may spoil our best plans and ruin our chances of happiness during the year if we do not have the presence and counsel of him who knoweth the end from the beginning?

A great Scottish preacher, approaching death, said near the end that he would like to preach just one time more. They asked him: "What would you choose to preach about?" and at once he replied, "Upon the enormous difficulty of salvation." He was thinking of the many who had started out with him on the pilgrimage of life and had fallen by the way, unable to win through to the final victory. He had seen men of light and leading, of strength and courage, go down in the struggle with temptation, bludgeoned into defeat by the enemy, because they thought they could live without God. But that simply cannot be done. "Man cannot live by bread alone," said Jesus. He needs not only "every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God," but God himself.

Abraham Lincoln in the White House, George Washington at Valley Forge, William E. Gladstone in the British Parliament, David Livingstone in the jungles of Africa, Wilfrid Grenfell on the Labrador ice-pack, John Bunyan in Bedford Prison, Victoria the Queen in Windsor Castle and Alice Freeman Palmer in Wellesley College—if all these found they could not face their problems and do their tasks without God, then how can you or I imagine we can conquer the difficulties and face the trials that lie in wait for us on the broad highway of the next twelve months? My friends, you can't do it; you haven't the wisdom, you haven't the strength, you haven't the courage to win through. You need the God of all grace to go with you and give you the victory. In the beginning start

Alfred E. Cooke

out with God, and keep step with him all through the year, and peace and power, gladness and strength will be yours till the end.

III

To begin the year with God also means that there will be abiding spiritual comfort for you in the hour of your deepest need, no matter what trials or tribulations the year may bring to you. There is no need to dwell upon this; many of you have already proved it to the full in the years gone by. Yet it is well to remind ourselves that he who "in the beginning" created the heavens and the earth is the God of all comfort and the source of all consolation for the tired, weary, broken hearts of the world. And he alone knows how many they are.

The publicity committee of a great church campaign approached a famous newspaper editor for advice as to how to advertise to get people to church. He replied: "Show them what you have to offer which they can get nowhere else. What do folks want most?" he went on. "Comfort. They're sick at heart, beaten,

weary, disappointed, discouraged. Make them know that there is comfort for them all in the church." That editor was wise. He knew that the deepest reason for the existence of the church is man's hunger for the help which only God can give. It is not the church, but the God whom men go to worship in the church who gives comfort to the despairing heart. It is he who cries adown the black, tempestuous welter of human history, "As one whom his mother comforteth so will I comfort you!" It is he who pierces the black tragedy of human woe and suffering with the light of his countenance, who puts around us the Everlasting Arms.

When his wife died Dr. Pusey, the famous English divine, wrote to a friend that he felt "as if the rushing waters were up to my chin, but underneath the chin there is a Hand, supporting it." Long centuries since there was a man who seemed to have fathomed all the depths of human agony and loneliness, but in the very center of the whirlpool he heard the music of a great voice which called: "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior." And from that time forth he knew with a great, glad certainty that the Eternal God was his refuge, and no storm or catastrophe could overwhelm him. And how many of those old-time heroes of the mountain and desert proved the same! Hear them shout: "My heart hath trusted in Him, and I am helped!"; "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me: Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me"; "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy"; "God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble"; "Though He slay me yet will I trust Him"; "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all"; "O, death, where is thy sting! O, grave, where is thy victory!"

Some of you young people have never yet been confronted by the grim, stark tragedies of life; the cold, rushing waters of sorrow and bereavement have not yet risen about your feet. You know nothing of the griefs that are more bitter than death—and God grant that you may never know them! But trials and troubles will surely come to you. Are you ready to meet them? Remember, there is only one way to meet them victoriously. It is to begin this year with God, to take him as your personal friend and companion every step of the way; to listen to his counsel, follow his guidance and obey his commands all through the days and hours of the next twelve months. "In the beginning God"—and on to the end, God.

IV

Finally, let us remember that if we begin with God; if we put ourselves under his control, and determine to follow his guidance throughout the year, he will finish what he began. He will see us safely and triumphantly through to the end. He has declared: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." And Paul, from long and varied experience of traveling the highways of eternity with God, tells us to be "confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in them will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ." When God sets out to do something he does not stop half-way. When he steps off the threshold of this new year alongside you, he is not going to drop you somewhere in the middle of the road, and leave you to struggle the rest of the way alone. He will see you through.

Have you ever stopped to think that the whole detail of each year of your life and mine *has already been thought through?* Yes, the whole universal process of life of which we are such insignificant parts has been thought through, long before creation's dawn. You start the new year not knowing what tomorrow will bring, but the God who starts with you knows the end, he planned it from the beginning. He makes no plunges in the dark. The problems of your life and mine he has already solved. All that is necessary now is for us to put ourselves in line with his will, and see the solution.

Remember, too, that God has not only *thought* his plans through, but is also *seeing* them through. He goes ahead with you to work out the problems of your life. He is there when the crisis comes, ready to take charge and carry out his program.

Bishop Quayle told of a time when he was sitting alone in his study at night worrying desperately about some most difficult problem, some torturing anxiety. And he says: "Along about midnight God came to me and said 'Quayle, you go to bed, I'll sit up the rest of the night.'" God hadn't run away in the hour of his servant's deepest need. He was there, and he knew what to do.

In the dark days of the Reformation in Europe, Luther wrote to his friend, Melancthon: "I am against those worrying cares which are taking the heart out of you. Why make God a liar in not believing his wonderful promises, when he commands us to be of good cheer, and cast all our care upon him, for he will sustain us? Do you think he throws such words to the winds? What more can the devil do than slay us? Christ has died for sin once for all, but for righteousness he will not die, but live and reign. Why then worry, seeing he is at the helm? He who has been our Father will also be the Father of our children. As for me (whether it proceed from God's spirit or stupidity, my Lord Jesus knows) I do not torment myself about such matters." No, it was not stupidity; it was the presence of the God who has thought things through from beginning to end, and goes with us to see them through to the consummation of his final purpose.

My friends, are any of you afraid of what lies ahead of you during the next twelve months? Do you tremble as you think of the possibilities of disaster in your business life, or the family circle, or anywhere else? Are any of you young people worried about what you will get to do, or afraid you cannot accomplish your heart's desire? Then begin the year with God. Take him as your counselor and friend. Make him the companion of your days and hours. Consult him about your plans. Obey his commands. Follow his leading, and sure as the sun rises in the east each morning and the stars shine in the vault of heaven when day is done, he will

be with you in every need, stand by you in every difficulty, and give you the victory in every struggle.

Recall Whittier's great meditation in his poem "My Soul and I":

Know well, my soul, God's hand controls
Whate'er thou fearest;
Round Him in calmest music rolls
Whate'er thou hearest.
What to thee is shadow, to Him is day
And the end He knoweth,
And not on a blind and aimless way
The spirit goeth.
Then of what is to be, and what is done,
Why queriest thou?
The past and the time to be are one,
And both are Now.

Begin the year with God, and he "will keep right on to the end of the road" beside you, till you finally come, at the end of all years, to that good land "where no enemy ever entered and no friend ever went away."

In the beginning, God! And on to the end, God!

The Mystic Versus the Engineer

By William H. Boddy

And I lifted up mine eyes and I saw a young man with a measuring line. And I said, "Whither goest thou?" And he said, "To measure Jerusalem." . . . And I said, "The Lord will be unto her a wall of fire round about her and a glory in the midst of her." Zechariah 2:1-5.

AMID the ruins of Jerusalem, one early morning, a saint met a surveyor. The man of God was communing with the Father of his spirit. The man of science was measuring the former foundations of the city. After war and waste and captivity they had come again with a company of people to rebuild their capital and fan to flame the smoldering fires of their culture. But how should they go about it? Here was the conflict between the mystic and the engineer. And if these two were different convictions in the soul of Zechariah the seer, then the antagonism was all the more intimate and acute. One man was on his knees with his eyes lifted to God, while all the ancient promises and dear dreams of Israel's spiritual greatness surged through his soul; the other man was on his knees, too, but he had a measuring rod in his hand and was carefully seeking out the old foundations of Zion. She should be built exactly where she was—only she should be stronger. The seer's vision pierced the future and the surveyor's eyes were on the past. The mystic saw Jerusalem a city without walls to which all nations should come in eager worship. The engineer saw Jerusalem a frowning fortress jealously guarding an ancient heritage. One said, "We will turn to the past for wisdom," the other said, "Behold, light is on the hills ahead!"

As I think of this situation and these two men, they seem to speak to our generation. We, too, have known desolations on the earth; we, too, have felt the shaking of the foundations, and we know some strange and dark captivity. Yesterday we were so proud and self-confident; today we begin to realize our impotence and our bewilderment. We must build anew. The engineer calls us to search among the ruins and the mystic tells us to look beyond the stars. Let us think of this together.

I.

That as a nation and a civilization we must rebuild, there is no doubt. There is no need to prove that assertion. Shall we seek to get back into an old world and fortify ourselves, or shall we go forward to find an ampler destiny? Not long ago, in two different groups I heard our present social and economic conditions discussed. In one a prominent lawyer said: "Let's get back to 1928-29. I was satisfied. We were getting along well." But in the discussion of the other group, when arguments and principles were set forth, a man of equally wide experience kept interrupting with the cryptic comment, "Valid for 1912." He realized the changed world in which we live. To one it was a question of recapturing something lost; to the other it was the necessity of recognizing change and meeting its challenge.

The engineer has his place. The past has its contribution to make. We should be foolish did we have to learn over again all that experience has to teach. That is the wildest radicalism that has no reverence for history and seeks to chart a future course with no regard for the lessons of the ages. But we cannot be the prisoners of the past. Men have visions as well as memory; a prophetic sense is no less valid than an historical sense.

Life is not static; it is vital. It breaks over every vessel made to contain it. We can't put new wine into old bottles. The bottles break. And much of the tension of our times comes from trying to cram and cabin life into categories and institutions it has outgrown. And strangely enough, the past to which many of us look with such longing as a time of sense and solidity was really a time of eager and irritating change. The fathers of our faith, to whom we would go back, were the forward-moving men of their generation. Our Presbyterian forbears who signed the Covenant in their blood were the hunted radicals of their day. The men who four hundred years ago translated the Bible into English were thought so dangerous to religion that they had to hide in barns and mountain fastnesses to carry on their work, and some of them were martyred. Washington and Jefferson and Randolph and Witherspoon were in their day foolish and destructive visionaries.

But do not put hasty and shallow interpretations upon that fact. Do not conclude that therefore the new is always the true. Nothing could be more false than that. These men all had the consciousness of being linked to something deep and vital in the past. There is a life, a law of life, seeking expression in all human history and institutions and associations. In one generation it expresses itself in certain forms and orders and usages, and above all, in certain truths. Most of these are timely; some of them are timeless. I feel sure that some ultimates have been discovered in principle.

Love—we shall not get beyond that. Justice is true—it was true before the morning stars sang together and will be true when the last sun has been buried in its grave of gold. Most of the orders and institutions we build will be replaced or modified, but unless we are true to the deepest, divinest principles revealed in the painful travail of Time, we shall build in vain. The old must not be destroyed, but it must pass into the new. "Old things pass away; behold, they become new!" A fierce radicalism would throw aside stones quarried by the seared hands of Time; a blind reaction would crystalize institutions beyond the possibility of development and only "try the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key." The only way to keep the values of the

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past is to let them grow into the fairer fruitage of tomorrow.

And so in reality we do. It is Emerson who reminds us that "every ship that goes to America got its chart from Columbus. Every novel is a debtor to Homer; every carpenter that shaves with a foreplane borrows the genius of a forgotten inventer. Life is girt all around with the contributions of men who have perished to add their point of light to our sky." But life ever seeks higher fulfillment and "ampler destinies divinelier lit"; but life is never false to itself. The highest future can only be built on the deepest past.

Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin somewhere puts my thought into a happy figure. When we hear Palestrina or Bach today we do not hear the compositions as those masters wrote them. The instruments they used were very different from ours. And so there has been a rearrangement to fit the necessities of our more complex and more perfect instruments. Then, too, no music can ever be reproduced just as it was played. A true musician, whenever he gives a great piece, reinterprets and, indeed, re-creates. But the score of the composer, his melodies and harmonies yet animate and govern the current rendering. It is in that sense that the values of the past must be carried over into the future. With the instruments of our times, our nature, our minds, our institutions, we must catch up the deepest rhythms and harmonies that have been discovered by the searching souls of a yesteryear. It is in that sense alone that we can be true to the creeds our fathers wrote and the constitutions they adopted. These are not stones marking a destination—they are pillars of light kindled at the altars of experience which seek to give some guidance along the road that lies ahead.

Jesus of Nazareth, when I think of life and its meaning, I come at last to Thee. After all my wrestling with the thought of the past and its influence on the future I hear Thy voice speak the principle for which I grope: "I came not to destroy but to fulfill"—not to destroy but to fulfill.

II.

And now this incident suggests another spiritual truth of which we need to remind ourselves. To the engineer the seer cries: "God shall be the wall of fire about this city and this civilization. He shall be the glory in the midst of her." That is the lesson we forget again and again. At last only character can save a people; only righteousness can exalt a nation, and in God's will is our peace. There is something in the universe that escapes the measurements of the engineer—something awful; something glorious. A purpose has been woven into the fabric of life; a moral destiny is enfolded in the structure of the universe. To live in consonance with that deep design is to find the way of life; to resist it in soul or civilization is to know the judgments of God.

It becomes ever plainer to me that the impotence of our generation, the weakness of our religion as well as the secularization of it, is born of an easy, vague, and undemanding theology. God has been an affiliate. He is a member emeritus of our society. We have had a God who is a convenient point of rhetorical reference. We have a God who gives celestial sanction to our own prejudices and desires. The glorious and Holy One in whose hands the nations are as a drop in the bucket, we have forgotten. "We have a hazy, humanized God whose activity is seen vaguely everywhere and clearly nowhere." The God for whose glory we exist and in the doing of whose will is the only reason for life has been too largely lost. Macaulay said of the Puritans, "They feared nothing but God." Of our generation some historians may yet write, "They feared everything—but God."

There are two ways in which the moral structure of the universe is evidencing itself. One is the change in history wrought by morally creative characters. With all that is said of the economic determination of life, the real points of new departure are made in the story of man's life when someone comes upon the scene with flaming soul and dream-drenched heart. The supreme turning point in history was a man—with God in his soul—a man who climbed to a cross. The mighty power

of Rome is as nothing today compared with the influence of a little Jew who went limping down its dusty, far-flung roads crying, "I am a debtor to Greek and barbarian, to bond and free." Caesar dies—Paul lives.

A few weeks ago I stood with uncovered head at the grave of William Penn in a quiet little country churchyard. Just a tiny stone marks his resting place. Since he dedicated his colony to God, pleading vainly with the king that it be called Sylvania lest his own name should be glorified—aye, since then mighty men have lived in that state of Pennsylvania, men who have controlled empires of industry. They are gone and forgotten. Others will be forgotten. No travelers from afar will seek the resting place of their dreamless dust. I wonder what makes the difference? A little way up the hillside from the country churchyard in the barn adjacent to a wayside inn I saw what are said to be the ribs of the "Mayflower." What a tiny vessel she was! A day or two before, I had a glimpse of the "Queen Mary," and you could sling several Mayflowers on her decks and not crowd her too greatly. But when the "Queen Mary" is forgotten the "Mayflower" will sail the seas.

MINORITIES IN HISTORY

Think of the influence in history of consecrated minorities. They are always defeating visionless majorities. It was an infinitesimal minority in the Roman empire that believed they had seen the quality of God's life in the Carpenter of Nazareth. It was only a tiny majority of our colonists who believed that we could build a democracy on these shores. It was a few praying men at Oxford university, despised and ridiculed, that started a revival of religion in England which perhaps saved her from bloody strife and kept the tumbrels from the London streets. Aye, it has always been true that the kingdom of God has been like a little leaven hidden in three measures of meal.

Now, just as every great artist has had the sense that he is not doing something so much as being used by Someone, so these creative personalities and the consecrated minorities have known that they had a strength not their own, a comradeship closer than brotherhood, and the assurance that no one could bring them ultimate defeat. The moral verities of the universe were finding in them some true expression. They had got hold of reality, and reality had seized their souls. The difference between a magnet and an ordinary piece of steel, as someone points out, is not in their strength. One has only its own strength but the other has the strength of the universe. In the steel the electrons have their positive and negative poles jumbled in such a way that they counteract and neutralize one another; in a magnet they are ordered so that the positive poles point one way and the negative all the other way, and through them the whole current of the earth's magnetism can pass. That is the secret of these creative personalities. The moral purpose of the universe finds a channel in a human soul or dedicated minority.

But now there is another way in which God's moral purpose is seen in the structure of life. There is a somber side to this truth. When we get completely out of step with the divine purpose; when we blatantly rebel against it, our souls and society know confusion and disintegration. Benjamin Franklin, after a life-time of reflection, said: "We have been assured that 'lest the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without his concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel; our prospects shall be confounded and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a byword down the future ages."

THE LAW OF PROGRESS

In a recent book Professor Van Dusen points out what has often been remarked before: "Man must take the hard path upward or he must sink to lower depths than he ever knew." There is no return to barbarism. A man cannot go back to childhood. Let him try and he becomes some foolishness and ugliness foreign to childhood. A person who has made the moral experiment of beautiful, consecrated living decides the way is too hard, the land too lonely, and he will go back and live on the same level as his friends whom vision has never disturbed. Can he do it? Never. You will find a cynicism in his soul, a meanness and hardness he never knew before. So a nation that sees the vision of righteousness, of freedom and opportunity for all men, and a commonwealth where men shall cooperate as brothers—let that nation turn from its dream; let it decide to make commercial success the main motive of its life, and it will sink lower than any world-old tyranny. One thinks of Matthew Arnold mourning the downfall of his beloved Greece. He says, "She failed in conduct." These are not the arbitrary judgments of a cruel God. This is but the law of progress, the law of life when it has been violated.

We fail today primarily not in any material thing. We fail for want of an adequate spiritual ideal to deepen, fertilize and unify the life of the soul and the life of the nation. We must be born again. A new motive, a divine deal must possess our souls.

What makes a city great?
Huge piles of stones heaped heavenward?
Vast multitudes who dwell within the wide encircling walls?
Palace and throne and riches past the count of man to tell, and wide domain?
True glory dwells where glorious deeds are done
Where men rise whose names athwart the dusk of misty centuries gleam like the sun.
In Athens, Sparta, Florence 'twas the *soul*
That was the city's bright immortal part
The splendor of their city was their goal,
Their jewel, the unconquerable heart.
So may the city that I love be great
Till every stone shall be articulate.

III.

Did I begin with the mystic *versus* the engineer? That is wrong. At last they must join in a consecrated comradeship. Only vision and labor can help us. When there is no vision—no shining, spiritual goal that gives content and direction to life—where there is no vision the people perish. But when vision is divorced from labor it becomes futile fantasy.

When the engines of science are seized by blindness

and selfishness, we see war let loose in the world. What is the good of flying across the seas if we have only bombs to drop? Think of a nation such as England instructing its people in the warning signals that mean they are to flee to their cellars and giving meticulous information as to the best way to seal all cracks against the invasion of poison gas. In a world like that it is not too much to fear that what science has learned at such cost about germs and the communicability of disease may yet be used for destroying peoples. There never was a chivalrous war—there never will be. On the other hand, if vision is only to dream of some better country beyond the stars and to lead people into a dull acquiescence in the things as they are, she has lost her mission.

VISION JOINED TO LABOR

Professor Beard rightly says: "Vision and labor have created all that is worth while in civilization. Hatred never built anything; crass selfishness never achieved an enduring value. If hatred and violence shall tear down today, tomorrow vision and labor must build upon the ruins. Without vision there is no inspiration for labor and no guidance in the 'gray lampless wastes of destiny.' Power without vision is brute force. Vision without knowledge is spineless day-dreaming. Wrath cannot bring bread to our tables; clothing for our nakedness and shelter for the shivering. And we have proved that knowledge alone can't do it. Only vision joined to labor can make a civilization durable in time and fit to live in."

No one has seen the vision as clearly as the Carpenter of Galilee. He called it the kingdom of God. "Seek it first," he said, "and all things shall be added unto you."

And then the great Master Builder laid its foundations in his own sacrificial cross. In him the mystic became a man of might.

A Supreme Intelligence

Too many people have a microscopic idea of the Creator. If they would only study his wonderful works as shown in nature herself and the natural laws of the universe, they would have a much broader idea of the Great Engineer. Indeed, I can almost prove his existence by chemistry.

One thing is certain, the universe is permeated by Intelligence.

I tell you no person can be brought into close contact with the mysteries of nature, or make a study of chemistry, without being convinced that, behind all, there is a Supreme Intelligence. I am convinced of that. I think I can, perhaps I may sometime, demonstrate the existence of such Intelligence with the certainty of a demonstration in mathematics.

Thomas A. Edison.

So far as we know, man is the latest development in the whirling star-mist. But the fact that he has intelligence enough to trace his evolution stands unexplained except by the presence in nature of an Intelligence far superior to his own.

S. I. Bailey.

The God Who Carries

By Albert D. Belden

Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, that have been borne by me from their birth, that have been carried from the womb; and even to old age I am he, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear; yea, I will carry, and will deliver. Isaiah 46:3, 4.

IT is now a well-established fact that the second part of the Book of Isaiah, from chapter 40 on, is the work of a different prophet from Isaiah of Jerusalem. He is sometimes called by scholars "second Isaiah," a nondescript title for the "Great Unknown" prophet of the exile. These chapters were doubtless first of all addresses delivered by this great spiritual genius to the Jews as they "wept by the waters of Babylon." It is this man who gives us the great treasure of the 53rd chapter with its doctrine of redemption by vicarious suffering, who also gives us in chapter 51 the wonderful program of the spirit-filled man, which Jesus took over bodily as his own program when he read the scriptures in the synagogue at Nazareth. Jesus loved this man's teachings and used them in the interpretation of his own cross, and yet the prophet's name is unknown to this day.

When the background of these chapters is taken into consideration—that mighty metropolis lying on the vast Mesopotamian plain like a great vat of humanity, melting-pot indeed of many peoples—the allusions made by the prophet become greatly illumined. More than once in the course of his addresses to the exiles this man makes holy fun of the idols of heathendom, and in chapter 46 particularly he pours clever satire upon the utter helplessness of the gods of the metropolis. "Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth," he says, describing the gods being carried in religious procession through the city streets. He bids us mark how they apparently bow to the plaudits of the populace, like some royal monarch riding through his capital. Only—to quote him rather freely—"they can't help it, because they are bound upon the backs of beasts, and as first one leg goes up and then another, of course they stoop and bow down together." "But," he cries, "they could not deliver the burden; they are themselves in captivity." Later on he says: "they lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith, and he maketh it a god; they fall down, yea they worship." "And then they lift him upon the shoulder and carry him and put him in his place, and he stands . . . " "Oh, yes, he stands all right! *but he cannot move.*" "Yea, one shall cry unto him, yet he cannot answer, nor save him out of his trouble."

CARRYING OUR RELIGION

In vivid contrast with this humorous picture of idols as mere inanimate things, incapable of doing anything, he sets the noble and ceaseless activity of the true God, Jehovah, and puts into God's mouth these memorable words, "even to your old age . . . and even to hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you."

Not long afterward this exiled people were lifted up, indeed by their God, to "mount on wings as eagles," and to be restored to their holy city. If any of them actually heard this brilliant satire when exiles in Babylon, how thrilled they must have been to have lived through so convincing a proof of the truth that Jehovah is a "God who carries."

The prophet's challenge has a deep and subtle meaning for us all. Have we a religion that carries, or do we carry our religion? Do we know a God whom we serve fearfully and on the whole unsuccessfully, or do we know a God that pours life into our veins, and lifts us beyond ourselves in victorious achievement? It is very instructive to alter the word "God" to "Life." Is life something that we live with strain and painful effort, or something that thrives in us and endues us with an energy which will not be denied? One has only to look around at other people living, and perhaps at oneself, to realize how sharp and true the challenge is. Under the strain of this modern world, most of us present, one fears, a picture that justifies Tennyson's lament:

> It is life of which our veins are scant,
> More life and fuller than we want.

Who would not find, if he could, life itself, drenching his being, pouring itself over mind, heart and will, lifting him with exhilarating delight to bolder and more efficient fulfilment of his powers? One is reminded immediately of Christ's "I am come that ye may have life and have it more abundantly." This is the difference between the true God and all pagan deities. The latter exact everything, and give nothing. The former gives with all the prodigality of love. But, alas, there is a Christianity that is pagan, in that it falls so short of the glorious generosity of this God who lifts and bears aloft.

CHURCH "SUCCESS"

I have been much impressed of late, in moving in and out of many churches, with a sense of the heaviness of the atmosphere, with the feeling that good men and women are fussing and straining in their endeavors to lift their organizations to success. One gets the impression that the eyes of diaconates are so hopelessly glued to difficulties that one might almost say, in children's parlance, "D. stands for Deacon and Difficulty!" If, when our church executives and other committees met together they began by rejoicing in the fact that they are engaged not in their own work but in God's, consciously putting him first; not merely in imploring prayer, but in cheerful praise and appreciation of the privilege that is theirs of following his leadership, then a new sense of joy and power would turn even difficulties into delights, making of them opportunities for expressing loyalty even to the point of daring! Undoubtedly it is our subtle egotism that prevents us putting God really first, and letting him have his way with us.

Yet it is a fundamental truth of life that power flows freely only through selfless personality. We all know the common experience of finding one's activities cramped and reduced in their effect by self-consciousness. The brilliant singer who performs in public with perfect technique and real talent, but is conscious of his or her prowess, can be a bitter disappointment to an audience; there are all the ingredients of success, but an obtrusive self stands in the way and spoils everything. When the brilliant cricketer is making his score, he undoubtedly plays the best cricket when he has lost sight of the crowd of spectators and the critical importance of the occasion, and, above all, the vital importance of the batsman, and is lost un-selfconsciously in the game.

A PARABLE FROM GOLF

One of the most vivid illustrations of this is provided by the game of golf. Here is your topheavy and important business man beginning the great game. He has been so used to being on the top of everything that

ALBERT D. BELDEN

he thinks it is quite an easy matter to be on top of golf. *He* is going to play—let all behold him! How firmly he grasps his club and with what determination he smashes at the ball. *He* is going to play golf—but alas, it is anything but golf he plays! His ball skews off into the rough, and he keeps his poor partner waiting while viciously he redeems it, only to proceed to cut yet more turf. It is a bitter experience. When at last, perhaps with the first touch of humility in his life, he decides to take a few lessons from the "pro" on the quiet, the first order he receives is extremely suitable: "You must put your head down and keep it down." He had never thought of anything like that before! The second injunction is like unto the first: "You must not press—don't force the game." In other words, "Abstract yourself from it."

With an ever-increasing and compulsory humility, the man finds himself obliged simply to obey the laws of golf and when at last he has in some degree suc-

cumbed to them, to his utter surprise, because so awkward does he feel that he expects next to nothing, he finds the ball sailing away with extraordinary swiftness and accuracy. Perhaps he then tastes in one sublime moment the eternal joy of perfect golf. Although it may be long before he achieves anything consistent in this way, yet for one ecstatic moment he knew golf!

It is a parable of what the whole of life may become when we genuinely leave ourselves in the hands of life. Better still is it when, leaving ourselves in the hand of life, *knowing it to be of God,* we find divine power getting its real chance with us and at last we really begin to live. "As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the children of God."

WHY AVOID GOD?

Why do we spend so much time and energy in avoiding God? Is it because we know that he might sweep us away to magnificent sacrifices and achievements for which at present we have not the courage, if we really gave in to him? Lewis Carroll, in "Alice in Wonderland," gives us a delightfully absurd picture of a quite incredible game of croquet. Alice finds herself invited to play with flamingoes as mallets and with hedgehogs rolled up as the balls, and with the queen's soldiers bending down for hoops! The flamingo is not a particularly easy bird to handle, especially if you have to use its head as a mallet; and the hedgehogs must have continually uncurled themselves just when they were wanted to be round; and though you might succeed so far, it would be only to find the queen's soldiers had a crick in their backs and were obliged to stand up!

We read the nonsense and call it such, but may there not be a deep parable hidden within it? Such is the difficult kind of game God has set himself to play in this human world of living souls; he cannot force us, for that would be to break and destroy and ruin his handiwork. He can only appeal and persuade and win our minds and hearts and souls into free cooperation with himself, and when that happens, how the game goes!

LET GOD TAKE THE LEAD!

When we come to think of it, there is something highly presumptuous in any of us imagining that we ourselves can be really equal to life. Who of us can be equal to the folly and the sin of humanity, to say nothing of the folly and sin of our own hearts? How can we hope to be able to keep all forces under such control that our happiness need never be invaded and our fortunes never threatened? Did the Jews ask that the Assyrian power should suddenly blaze out from the north and suck them away into captivity? Who, then, are we to imagine that we can guide and control our own destiny? Is it not the highest wisdom to admit at least some limit to our powers and to seek God with our whole heart and let him take the lead?

In that wonderful 46th Psalm, which concludes with the sound advice, "Be still and know that I am God," the writer bases that injunction upon the evident activity of God in human affairs. If he is right, if God is really active in your life and mine, in our human world generally, then must we not be careful not to run ahead of him? Should we not avoid the incredible foolishness of trying to manage our own affairs? Must we not surrender the vain and prideful thought that by our own straining and struggle we can keep ourselves and those whom we love safe and happy. Instead, let us step into the rest and the strength of that power of God which waits to well up through our own souls into all our life. Our God is not a God who needs to be carried; he is the God who carries.

Your Signature

By Fred Eastman

O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Psalm 8:1.

And his name shall be on their foreheads. Revelation 22:4.

WHEN a child first learns to write his name he goes about signing it everywhere on sidewalks and on walls. Soon he discovers that boys are apt to couple his name with other names that embarrass him and so he learns not to be so free about writing his name in public places. Later he falls in love and writes his signature at the end of impassioned letters which a few months afterward he would give his eyeteeth to get back. Thus he learns to be careful about putting his signature to letters that go out beyond his control. By other experiences he learns to be wary about the legal documents he signs.

Thus far our thought is obvious and perhaps trite. But there is a deeper truth than this about our signatures. The man who wrote the eighth Psalm had it. He was thinking about the signature of God. He had looked at the glory of the heavens—the stars, and the sun, and the moon—and he had looked at the tiny little speck called man. He had seen that this little speck had been given power over much of the physical universe. He had seen that even little children had been given wisdom and beauty. How did it come about? Did it just happen? "No," he cries, "it is the Lord's doing; his signature is written all over it." "How excellent is thy name in all the earth!" This mercy, this blessing, this beauty—these are the letters in the signature of God!

YOUR SIGNATURE UPON YOUR WORK

Our deeper thought, then, is this, that we all, like God, leave our signatures upon our work whether or not we actually spell out the letters in pen and ink. Every now and then as you listen on your radio you hear a musical selection played upon a Stradivarius violin. How do the musicians know that Stradivarius made those violins? His name does not appear on them. They know it by the tone quality of the instruments. Only Stradivarius was ever able to create a violin with just that tone quality. In the same way, painters and sculptors know the works of the masters in their art without the necessity of having their names signed in letters. The signature of the master artist is in the very brush strokes and the marks of the chisel and in the

intangible personality of the work itself. A Rafael is a Rafael and couldn't be anything else. Only Mozart could have written Mozart's music. Connoisseurs know Chippendale's furniture and Cellini's gold and silver work without the label of a signature. Anyone who knows the works of Philip Barry or of George Bernard Shaw or of Eugene O'Neill does not have to look at the theater program to see which one wrote the new play now being witnessed for the first time.

In the same way all of us, even in the most homely and routine of our activities, leave our signatures upon our work. When a father goes home and finds a trail of cookie crumbs from the pantry to the front door, he knows that it was not his wife who did it. That long, long trail of cookie crumbs was his small son's signature. A student does not need to be in a class very long until the instructor recognizes his paper whether or not he has signed it. Every woman weaves her signature into her home; every man stamps his upon his business or profession; the carpenter upon the house he builds; the mason upon the chimney.

YOUR SIGNATURE UPON PERSONS

But the biblical writer in Revelation goes further. He tells us that the signature of God is written not only upon his work, but upon persons. "His name shall be on their foreheads." Does not that truth apply to us as well? Inevitably parents leave their signatures upon their children. We say that a boy is his mother's son or his father's son. We are not referring simply to physical appearance. We are referring to mental and spiritual characteristics. We are saying that the parent has left his signature upon the child.

John Ruskin was said to have the most analytic mind in Europe of the nineteenth century. In his book "Praeterita" he admits the justice of this tribute, but he does not claim the credit for himself. He gives it to the mother and father who planned his bringing up with infinite care. This is the way he describes the home life with which they surrounded him:

> I had been taught the perfect meaning of peace, in thought, act and word.
>
> I never had heard my father's or mother's voice once raised in any question with each other; nor seen an angry or even slightly hurt or offended glance in the eyes of either. I had never heard a servant scolded. . . . I had never seen a moment's trouble or disorder in any household matter; nor anything whatever . . . done in a hurry. . . . I had no conception of such a feeling as anxiety. . . .
>
> Next to this quite priceless gift of Peace, I had received the perfect understanding of the natures of Obedience and Faith. I obeyed word, or lifted finger, of father or mother, simply as a ship her helm; not only without idea of resistance, but receiving the direction as a part of my own life and force, a helpful law, as necessary to me in every moral action as the law of gravity in leaping. And my practice in Faith was soon complete: nothing was ever promised me that was not given; nothing ever threatened me that was not inflicted, and nothing ever told me that was not true.

Contrast that home for a growing boy with the one Byron had. His mother was a woman of violent temper. She had a natural maternal affection, but she had no self-control, so that she alternately spoiled her son with indulgence and railed at him in her fits of temper. In one of them she chased him around a table, calling him a "lame-brat." Is it any wonder that Byron grew up with such undisciplined passions in his own frame that they well-nigh wrecked his genius so that at the age of thirty-six he wrote:

> My days are in the yellow leaf
> The flowers and fruits of love are gone,
> The worm, the canker and the grief
> Are mine alone.

Teachers leave their signatures upon students, and herein lies the high responsibility of teaching. A student may have forgotten all he learned in a given course, but the touch of that teacher's fingers upon his soul is

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there forever. One of the greatest teachers in the mid-west of the generation now passing is Graham Taylor. He was not content to touch only the candidates for the ministry who came into his classes in the Chicago Theological Seminary. He taught to reach out and touch those who hadn't had a chance to secure a college education and who were living in the congested districts of Chicago, so he established Chicago Commons, a community center where young men and women could help themselves to a more abundant life. Among the young men who came was a lad named Dever. He came at first just to enjoy the social facilities of the house, its debates, its forum, its games, but he came in contact there with Graham Taylor, and Graham Taylor wrote his signature upon that impressionable young life, and he wrote it in letters of idealism and honesty and courage. The years passed and young Dever became the mayor of Chicago, and he wrote into his administration

the idealism, the honesty and the courage which he had learned in part at least from Graham Taylor.

The longer we know people the deeper we write our signatures upon them. A photograph of your soul would show the names of the persons with whom you have shared the experiences of life. Some of those signatures are written in scars, and others in lines of generosity, affection, strength. Just so, your signature is on the souls of others. How is it there—a scar, or a line of beauty? One of the amazing things about Jesus is the way he plowed his signature into the souls of his disciples. When Peter and John were arrested in Jerusalem for working miracles, they showed a courage that they had never shown before. Whereupon the authorities came to realize that these men had been companions of Jesus.

YOUR SIGNATURE UPON YOUR COMMUNITY

There is yet one more application of this truth about our signatures. We write them not only upon our work, and upon the persons we work with; we write them also upon our communities and upon the countries in which we live. Al Capone and John Dillinger wrote their names upon America. They wrote with bootleg liquor for ink and machine-gun bullets for punctuation. The whole world knows those signatures. But others have written their signatures in letters of mercy and kindness. So it is with all of us. Long before our names are carved on tombstones in the cemetery, they are carved into the life of our community—its schools, its churches, its homes, even into the width of its streets and the architecture of its buildings. They are carved for better or worse upon the institutions and the government which we help to create.

How about your signature? Day by day you are writing it upon your work, and upon the persons you live with, and upon your community. You can write it in the little letters of self-seeking. But there is a better way. Write it as your Master wrote his—in letters of kindness and of courage!

We Need Protest

"What we need is protest: the world needs to be protested against," Bishop McConnell said recently. "Even the Christian religion was conceived in protest against things as they were, and it is well we now have disturbers who will not let us sleep. Beware of an easy adjustment in life for the chances are there is something wrong. We have men who say world problems can be solved by converting all men to Christ and live a mystic life. That is a sense of retreat. The World never looked more discouraging, but its problems never will be solved by retreating."

Jesus came to make all things new, and to turn things upside down. He was a prophet, and he suffered the fate of the prophets. We should never forget that we claim to be followers of this same Jesus.

The Baptist World.

Science is the great cleanser of human thinking; it makes impossible any religion but the highest.

B. H. Streeter.

The Growing Conception of God

By Allan A. Hunter

THE other day a perplexed college student came to me with this problem: he was taking geology in a class where it was assumed that human life has been on this planet a good many hundreds of thousands of years and here was he, a church member, doubting that the world was suddenly made at six o'clock in the morning, six thousand years before Christ.

Now that student had gone through our church school. It shocked me to realize how little we had done for that young man to prepare him for a vital faith that could face the findings of the laboratory open-eyed. All these years he had been with us and yet we had not made clear to him a simple elementary fact! The Bible is not an up-to-the-minute lecture in geology or history: the Bible is the undying story of man's dawning consciousness of God. If we of the church allow our young people to pass through our schools unequipped with the truth that the Bible, like the rocks, has deposits that go back to crude and primitive forms which have long ago been outgrown, we should not throw up our hands in horror when a sophomore, innocent as a new laid egg, explosively informs his relatives, "Thank God I'm an atheist." Far from being an atheist he may be an eager mind getting ready to hatch.

In the Bible we find a growing conception of God. That should not discourage us. On the contrary, it should thrill us to know that man beginning with a childish idea could develop a more and more mature grasp of the meaning of life. There is good authority for this interpretation. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews in the first two verses of the first chapter exclaims as if it were a glorious fact: "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets, in many fragments and in many fashions, has at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son." But there is an even higher authority for this view of God unfolding himself to man, or being more intelligently recognized by man. That authority, as we shall see, is the Son of Man himself.

WHY NOT PROGRESS?

There are good people who fear that such a conception of growth destroys the value of the Bible. They need not fear. They need not be ashamed of progress.

When I became engaged, my sister, rummaging through old drawers, unearthed some yellowed pictures and sent them off to the woman I was about to marry. When I saw my fiancee poring over those pictures I was at first furious and humiliated. There, staring foolishly from a faded photograph, was a very small boy in old fashioned pants and a high stiff collar, with teeth that stuck out shamefully. If only someone had buried that silly token of my past! Another snapshot was a bit scratched but not sufficiently disfigured to conceal an eight year old lad proudly holding an air-gun. Why had not someone torn up that reminder of barbarism

long since repented of? Then there was that awful adolescent smugness about which unfortunately the high school camera was not lying. . . . Surely no woman could ever respect a man with such a tell-tale record. That was how I bitterly argued to myself. But the woman who had just become engaged seemed to think differently. Instead of despising the person so cruelly exposed, she rejoiced in these crude beginnings, and not patronizingly either. To her they were cherished stages of progress.

We who love the Bible can likewise rejoice in watching the development of man's seeking after God as traced through the Scriptures. With such an expectation let us open the faded and sometimes mutilated pages of the Bible's family album.

EARLY CONCEPTIONS CRUDE

One of the first pictures is Jehovah walking about in a garden, looking for someone. Remember, the people who told that story were simple folk and they actually thought that Jehovah had legs and arms, eyes and a nose just as they had. He had made the world in 144 hours, and let us not pretend that the six days meant six ages or aeons, for they didn't. He liked to stroll about in the cool of the evening just as Arabs today enjoy "smelling the air," as they call it after the burning heat of the day. The savor of incense was sweet to his nostrils, not figuratively but literally. He is jealous of other gods, and he gets angry. The special reason he is now looking around is to find a man who is hiding from him. The man is hiding because he has eaten a certain kind of fruit which will give him power that Jehovah doesn't want to share with him. At last the man comes out shivering from behind the bushes, shivering not so much because he is inadequately dressed (or rather not dressed at all), but because he is almost frightened to death. You know the rest of the story.

But do you? Do you know why that story was told in the first place? It wasn't to give a college freshman of the year 1934 scientific information about the biological origin of man. It was, rather, to answer certain questions that puzzled man in his theological infancy. Why do we human beings have to earn our bread by the sweat of our brow? Why does woman suffer pain at childbirth and why is she inferior to man? Remember, woman suffrage had not yet been invented. Since woman was just a rib extracted from the side of her better half, it was in the nature of things that she be treated as the property of man. Why was there so much trouble in the world? Remember, we men are always looking for an alibi. Well, can anyone think of a better one than this: "The woman thou gavest me, she gave of the fruit of the tree." The exciting thing about these stories is not the crudity of the conception but the budding sense that God was in the beginning of things and that man must choose between right and wrong.

But let us first admit that the early conception was crude. It was like the skin over a snake's eyes. For a season the skin is transparent and useful. But at last it becomes old and impossible to see through, and the snake becomes not only blind—until the old scales are shed—but exceedingly dangerous. These old conceptions served their purpose once. Today they obstruct our vision. Look up the thirty-third chapter of Exodus. Moses is cowering in a hole in the rocks. Jehovah is agreeing that Moses has the right to behold his glory is passing by. But does Moses dare look straight into Jehovah's face? If he did that, he would die. So what does the leader of the Israelites do? He waits discreetly. Then he ventures to gaze upon the rear view of Jehovah.

It may be that the early wandering Jews got their mental picture of Jehovah from their vision of the lightnings and storms that flashed about the summit of a volcanic mountain on the Sinai desert. However that may be, if you and I had been contemporaries of Abraham or Jacob or Moses or Saul we would have been mighty cautious about approaching the deity. Today, you wouldn't unhesitatingly touch a live wire carrying a thousand kilowatts. In those days, you wouldn't be very eager to get direct contact with Jehovah. "Moses," cried the people, in effect, to their chief, "Moses, you go up there on the mountain and talk with Jehovah. We'll stay down here!" Had we lived then, it would hardly have occurred to you or me to enjoy the kind of prayer Miss Muriel Lester exults in when she wakes up in the morning, "O God, thou art radiant joy, shining beauty, creative power, all-pervading love, perfecting understanding and peace." We would be apprehensive about opening ourselves as did Thoreau to the divine presence as if one were to meet "some grand, serene, immortal, infinitely encouraging though invisible Companion and walk with him."

O yes, we might, before the day's work, hike up to a hill top and lay an offering of a dove or a lamb close to a stone where Jehovah dwelt and once in a while we would proudly visit a sacred tree where perhaps Abraham talked with visitors from heaven. But to pray as some great souls seek to pray today, listening and responding to the loving and universal spirit that stirs the conscience of all mankind, we would scarcely expect such a releasing experience as that.

THE TRIBAL GOD OF THE JEWS

How could anybody enjoy communion with the being, all too like a bloodthirsty Arab sheikh, pictured in the fifteenth chapter of I Samuel? He has a consuming grudge against the Amalekites. Eventually he gets his chance, and through the prophet Samuel, Jehovah orders the warrior Saul, "Go and defeat Amalek; massacre him and all that belongs to him, do not spare him, slay both men and women, child and infant, ox and sheep." Jehovah is so narrow in his sympathies that we read of Abraham begging him not to "slay the righteous with the wicked" in Sodom and Gomorrah.

Let us frankly admit this truth: the Jews for many groping centuries took for granted that Jehovah was a tribal god. He might demand brotherhood within the national borders, but outside, brutality would be more to his liking. It was in a late century that an amazingly emancipated Jew heard the Eternal speak thus liberally: "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance." Not only was Jehovah a tribal god. He was in bitter competition with other tribal gods who were very powerful within their own domain. Once when the Jews were engaged in a

holy war against the Moabites across the river Jordan, the king of the Moabites in his desperation sacrificed his first born son on the walls of his beleaguered city. That turned the trick. Chemosh, god of the Moabites, rallied to the defense of his clients. The result? "There came great wrath upon Israel!" In other words, up there in that blue mountain range east of Palestine, Jehovah was not so potent as his rival. Again, David during his bandit days had a streak of bad luck. His enemies pushed him beyond Jehovah's frontier. This meant that while there he could get no help from the god who could be worshiped only within restricted territory. That territory was much like our Griffith Park in Los Angeles.

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Imagine a god whose domain is Griffith Park. The moment you get beyond the fence you are an outlaw and you can do outlandish things. You can lie to anybody outside or murder anybody with more or less impunity as far as your god's wrath is concerned. For he doesn't function out of bounds; nor have you any ethical responsibility.

Now if there is one thing the human race needs at this hour, it is a larger conception of God. The old tribal idea imbedded in certain parts of the Old Testament, which represents the supreme object of our allegiance as interested only in a small segment of the population of the earth, will have to go. The old nationalistic pictures of deity that inspire us to treat people beyond our own borders or outside our own class as "lesser breeds without the law," is like an aggravated vermiform appendix. Long, long ago that organ no doubt had its function. Perhaps it was a second stomach which enabled men to gulp down more food and thus survive. Right now it is a source of poison and we had better have it cut out before it ruptures and destroys mankind. Unless we can learn to look out upon Germans and Frenchmen, Russians and Chinese, Japanese and Americans, all as children of the one utterly supreme God, the munition makers will win. It is either the God who is all inclusive in his good will or it is the Bloody Internationale. The growing conception of God, which moves on to a sovereign, all-loving Spirit above the nations, is just about the most important single conception that the human race can climb to today.

The marvelous thing about the Bible is that you see something developing. Man at first childishly tries to make God in his own crude image. At least he seeks only to be made over in God's spiritual image. Think of the Bible in two ways. First, there is the Eternal speaking from the supreme sending station. Second, there is man awkwardly turning the dial to catch that message. Naturally there are preliminary squeaks. Would you expect those early pioneers to ground the apparatus perfectly, to erect the right kind of antennae? Of course there are shrill, discordant, sometimes shocking sounds. In the midst of that glorious psalm which cries, "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me," you will encounter static: "I hate them with perfect hatred." Never forget, however, that clumsy hands against great odds daringly continue to tune in.

THE BIBLE A STORY OF DEVELOPMENT

Listen to the herdsman of Tekoa three hundred years after Saul and the Amalekite massacre, facing the sleek priests who sacrifice beasts on a hill top as a substitute for sacrificial living. Amos still imagines there are other gods, no doubt, but he knows that the God he worships demands fair play. There must be no treading upon the poor; you can't sell them for a pair of shoes. "Let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."

Watch Hosea at the dial. His face lights up with a new idea. The God he worships is a God of mercy. Just as he, Hosea, has forgiven his wife who turning prostitute has betrayed him, so God broods over his children with an unbreakable patience and compassion, demanding intimate knowledge of him "rather than burnt offerings."

Can you see the eyes of Isaiah glowing as he catches the terrible music of the Infinite Holiness? "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory."

Another hand touches the dial, and in Micah the sixth chapter we hear this chord of the ongoing symphony: "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly (That is Amos' note), to love mercy (that is Hosea's), and to walk humbly with thy God?" (the emphasis of Isaiah).

Jeremiah makes a new adjustment. These other so-called gods we have taken for granted simply do not exist. There is only one and he is sovereign. Perhaps he wins by suffering, for that is the path on which this strange prophet himself has set his feet.

Another, call him the Second Isaiah, if you will, follows Jeremiah's clue. There comes to him clearly a divine word of haunting glory. God wants the people

of Israel to be as a suffering servant among the nations. Though Israel be led like a lamb to the slaughter, by his stripes shall the peoples be healed. And you can almost see the wonder on the face of that sensitive listener enduring exile in the Mesopotamian valley, as the question almost strikes him, *Is God like that?*

Then at last the "One ineffable face"—and the music comes through perfectly. We have no doubt now what God is saying. "Love your enemies . . . do good to them that hate you."

JESUS THE PERFECT REVEALER

Jesus did not invent the conception of God as Father. Many sayings of others before he spoke are proof of that. But in him the conception became flesh.

The Master was all for a growing conception of God. Let the old will to destroy give place to the new will to redeem. "Moses said, an eye for an eye. . . . But I say unto you." There we have the final authority in the Bible for seeking a more adequate understanding of the Father.

An outstanding American philosopher out of his own experience suggests the marvel of such a dawning consciousness of God. It was a blazing day in California. The car would not start. So with his father at the wheel he turned the machine around so that it would coast downhill. As he shoved he caught from his father's eyes a glance as if the older man were saying (though no words passed between them): "I am sorry it happened like this, all this work and heat. But it is all right between you and me, isn't it son?"

The throttle was open and as the car got under way, the father realizing he was going too fast, pulled at the wheel. Then he tried to right the car, but too late. It turned over. The father was never conscious again.

But the last look he gave was sufficient. Into Henry Nelson Wieman's memory it burned like a great light. The deep things the father had not been able to convey with words now became clear. He saw now what revelation means. "God gave a wistful look," he explains, "God gave a wistful look, a loving, anxious look. The look was Jesus."

So overwhelming is the light of the Eternal we glimpse in Jesus that we count it not irreverent for Bishop McConnell to declare: "Christ is the highest moral idea for men. I believe that he is the highest ideal for God. If it is morally binding for men to live up to the Christ in themselves . . . it is morally binding on God to live up to the Christ in himself."

In a sense that we of the nations must somehow grasp even this is true, "He that hath not seen Jesus hath not seen the Father."

We Need Great Believers!

By Lynn Harold Hough

THE modern world is falling apart because there are so few great believers. The prophet Amos walks right out of the eighth century B.C. into the life of today because he was one of the great believers of the world. He knew that God had spoken. He belonged to a nation which knew that God had spoken. Indeed, whatever he does or wherever he is the Jew can never really forget that he belongs to a nation which has heard God speak. In every land and in every age the people of mighty assurance are the men and women who maintain the civilization of the world. When life loses its major premises of definite conviction not much remains which is worth serious consideration.

Broadly speaking, it may be said that the Protestants, the Catholics and the Jews maintain the citadels of belief in this Republic. If they can give vigorous and constant testimony to the beliefs which they have in common and if each can make room for the practice on the part of the others of the beliefs which are their heritage as a group, great days for this nation will lie ahead. The belief in God and righteousness for which the prophet Amos stood may well represent the common territory of profound belief which these groups have in common. And this common corpus of belief, if universally accepted, would lead to a moral and spiritual rebirth on the part of this republic.

The great believers are the great adventurers. It is only on a basis of deep assurance regarding central matters that really glorious adventure becomes possible. The chaotic changes which come to the mind which has no indubitable beliefs are a series of nightmares. You need a chart and a compass and a polar star if you are going to sail all about the seven seas. Adventure is only saved from anarchy by great beliefs. Change only becomes evolution when great beliefs lie behind it.

The great believers are the great builders. When life is a whirlwind of wild change you construct tents, but you do not erect great buildings. You must have the assurance of permanence which comes from profound beliefs in order to inspire the confidence which will lead the builders to do their work. You must have great believers if great libraries are to be built. You must have great believers if great cathedrals are to be erected. You must have great believers to inspire the construction of any sort of sound economic and social structure.

The great believers are the great stabilizers. No nation can have prosperity without stability. No nation can have happiness without stability. No nation can have character without stability. And the great believers furnish the cement which holds civilized life together. They are loyal to the principles which give validity to contracts and offer a stable basis for the moral and social and spiritual life. This nation needs intellectual and economic and social stability more than words can tell. It is the great believers who offer the permanent sanctions in whose absence civilization itself is doomed.

The great believers can produce a tolerant world. If the best we can offer to mankind is the tolerance of indifference we are in a most precarious state. There is no deep root and there is no security in the tolerance of indifference. But when the great believers begin to pool the beliefs they have in common and to make room for the differences which characterize them as members of separate groups the world can indeed breathe easily. It is only the man whose own belief is infinitely precious who can come to know the meaning of real tolerance. He may become capable of measuring the preciousness of another man's belief by his passionate loyalty to his own. And so the great believers can create such noble tolerance as the world has never known before.

The "light half believers of casual creeds" are really of quite secondary importance in the life of men. They only know change. They cannot experience progress. Having nothing to which to be faithful they cannot know faith. Having nothing to which to be loyal they cannot know loyalty. It is the great happiness of the three commanding religious groups in this republic to have in common a great faith in God and a great faith in righteousness. On this common foundation they can build an edifice of mutual understanding which will give new glory to the nation of which they are a part. They all believe that God has spoken. And this faith is needed more than anything else in our torn and broken life.

(A Statement Issued by the National Conference of Jews and Christians.)

A Pastoral Prayer

By Arthur C. McGiffert, Jr.

O THOU Nameless Being whom yet we call by the most precious names men have invented, calling thee Father, Mother, Friend and Lover; Judge Eternal, robed in splendor, again in stammering feebleness would we try to tell thee what thou dost mean to us.

Thou hast set eternity in our hearts. We are not as those who have no shrine. Deeply lodged in our mind is thy holy image—mysterious, fascinating, awful—commanding our devotion, compelling us to trust in truth, in loveliness, in duty. Thou art the holy one, standing apart, uplifted. Thou art God. It is thou that speakest; we listen. It is for thee to use us; not for us to use thee. Thou art God; we are servants. Why are our hearts restless until they find their strange rest in thee? Why is the peace that passeth understanding in thy keeping? Is it because with thee are the issues of life? And until we discover our issue, our own self, the cause for which we came into the world, we remain dull-spirited, bobbing about upon the surface of life like driftwood upon the sea.

Yet we have seen thee convert a wasted life into wholesome and delightful living. Again and again have we seen thee from an age that is dying bring a new age of birth. Thy resources we still confidently trust. The Creator, the Everlasting God, will not faint. Thou wilt not grow weary. Thy right hand hath gotten thee the victory and thou shalt, in thy good time, see of the travail of thy soul and be satisfied.

We hail thee, thou God of Good Hope—thou Captain of Victory. Amen.

Judge of the sons of men—who dost set before us a way that is hard, a way that is difficult to manage, requiring us to subordinate our wayward desires to the rule of thy right hand and thy goodness—at times thou art hateful in our sight. We want to have our own way, not thy way. Thou thwartest us. Thou dost beset us before and behind with many an obstacle to our inclinations. We do not want the real; we want to escape into the unreal where we may live according to our fancy, where we may make our own terms with life, and not have life demanding that we surrender to its terms. Canst thou not leave us alone, O God? How is it that even though we make our bed in hell, thou art there, relentless Judge, ever at the back of thy runaways? Canst thou not transform thyself into a good fairy, a lucky stone, become the Open Sesame for our desires? Then should we welcome thee as the darling of our heart, as now we denounce thee as our great antagonist.

How shall we deal with thee? Can we love thee, O thou divine enemy? Yea, that is the secret, that when we love our enemies, even thee, O God, thou becomest for us a friend. As we accept thy way, yielding ourselves to thee as Fact, we escape from fairyland and find that in thy law is liberty; in thy truth is light; in thy beauty, poise and power. Amen.

Lift up our hearts, O God! Into thy presence we come worn, puzzled, bruised by the experiences of the weeks and the months. We have tried laughing at life. But the laugh has turned to bitterness in our mouth. We have tried to pass life through the fire of our thinking and have seen that evil is partial only, that it is good in the making; that on the whole life is beautiful. And when we have been hurt, we have tried to reconcile ourselves to private loss and pain by thinking of the beneficence which on the whole obtains. Yet have we made sorry going of our philosophy.

We have tried to defy life, battling against its evils with the power of hate, returning malice for malice, only to discover that madness lies that way, for we become the very image of the thing we hate, and lose our manhood.

And sometimes desperately and falteringly we have tried the way of righteousness, returning good for evil, bearing, serving, helping, trusting that all things work together for good. We have sought to relieve misery, to build up the constructive forces, to carry the responsibility of our position; to live by our hopes and not by our fears. And we have been stirred by a strange and wild elation. We have found ourselves among a goodly company. We bless thee for them; for those who, tender and true, are as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land; for those who in days of disaster still show themselves men of undaunted spirit, given to no impractical regrets, taking their place without bitterness in the great fraternity of troubled souls; for those who decline to add to the world's miseries a private quota of self-pity and suspicion; those for whom the commonplace appears rainbow hued; those who, when sorrow hangs in dark clouds over the entire landscape of their being, can yet trust that the sunshine will break through and suffuse their day with a light not known before; for those who by their friendliness make more desirable, more accessible, the friend who sticketh closer than a brother, even Jesus Christ. Amen.

Wanted: A Spiritual Technique

By Roy L. Smith

THE human personality, so far as we know, is the most complex thing in all the universe. It represents a combination of a highly coordinated physical organism of amazing powers, with a mentality the possibilities of which have never been fully explored, and a mass of impulses, motives, instincts and highly explosive emotions, which combine in what is popularly known as the "spiritual life."

Of all the problems of life, the most difficult, and those which have the greatest significance in the quest for human happiness and a sense of well-being, are the spiritual problems. Deep down in the unconscious life of every individual, flow unrecognized streams of influence, producing strange and fantastic results in behavior and mental attitudes. Again and again the most commendable efforts are defeated by these weird forces, whose existence is only vaguely realized and whose nature is not understood. The result is that life becomes a tantalizing mystery. Paul, experiencing this desperate struggle of forces going on within himself, exclaimed: "When I would do good, then evil is present with me."

● *The Universal Search For God*

Central in the consciousness of every individual, is an instinctive search for spiritual satisfactions. There is an almost universal conviction that there is a Power in the universe, outside the human soul, which has a definite correspondence with something fundamental in the human personality. Just as steel filings respond to the magnet, so the human soul responds to "something" in the universe. For convenience's sake, we have called that something, "God." This feeling that God, "pulling" upon the human spirit, somehow creates within the individual a persistent longing for some way to respond—some means of communication.

On the other hand, there is a vast area of consciousness, consisting of moods, aspirations, attitudes of mind, motives, impulses and longings. As these are managed, organized, understood and utilized, life becomes a glorious triumph. As they are misused, mismanaged and left without organization, the human spirit becomes a battlefield, with peace and power as the first casualties.

Now the first duty of the church to the people is to furnish them with guidance and instruction in the management of the spiritual life. This will include, of course, help in the matter of communicating with God (the people must be educated as to the nature of God) and training in the utilization of the spiritual elements of life.

● *Where the Church Is Failing*

From time to time the question is asked, "Why don't people go to church?" A better question might be, "Why *do* people go to church?" With all due allowance for the element of "interest" and the contention that religion must deal with "practical" economic and social issues, the real reason is that they are searching, consciously or unconsciously, for some help in understanding and organizing their spiritual life.

Roy L. Smith

In every human soul there is some sense of helplessness, some consciousness of wrong, some feeling of spiritual confusion, some desperate fear of defeat. There is also an undefined conviction that these things need not be. Therefore we go on seeking.

As a follower of Christ, I believe we have the answer to all these deep questions of the soul in the teachings of Jesus. But the Christian church of today, in my judgment, is failing to serve the people of this generation because it is not furnishing them with a spiritual technique. We exhort them to pray, but we do not teach them how to pray. We tell them that divine power is available, but we do not instruct them in the technique of contacting that power. We insist upon faith without giving any guidance in the exercise of faith. We say we have the cure, but we do not put it within reach of the people. The great need of the average church is a definite, understandable, guaranteed technique for the spiritual life.

● *The Cults and "Results"*

The popularity of the cults is due, in no small part, to the fact that they do supply a technique. Unity, for instance, supplies its followers with carefully prepared lessons and studies for each day. These lessons include certain spiritual setting-up exercises, so explicitly stated and so simply phrased that the humblest can understand. The same may be said for Christian Science. Without a doubt the success of the Oxford groups is due to this same fact—they show people how to go about spiritual tasks, in a way that will get definite results.

Dr. Leslie Weatherhead tells of an honest inquirer who came to a certain preacher, saying, "I want to find God," to which the preacher replied, "Oh, there are a hundred ways of finding God." "Very well, then," replied the seeker eagerly, "show me just one of them, for I do want very much to find Him." It is easy to generalize about the glories of our faith. We flounder when it becomes necessary to be specific.

● *The Preacher and the People's Praying*

It is probably safe to say that not more than one Christian out of every hundred really knows how to pray. Of course they know how to beg for things they want, as petulant children insist upon the satisfaction of their childish wants. But to pray until the soul is lifted up, out of the pettiness of the day into the glory of the presence of a living God, is an experience through which a very small minority of Christians have ever passed. An aggressive faith that sends us out calm in the face of danger, poised in the presence of hazards, peaceful in the midst of impending crises, is, likewise, a possession of only a small minority of Christians. Indeed, these spiritual arts are achievements which the average Christian believes are entirely outside all possibility so far as he is concerned.

"Preach hopefully to the man in sin, and helpfully to the man in trouble, and you will never want for an audience," said the late Dr. Frank W. Gunsaulus to a young theological student going out to his first pastorate. It is doubtful if better advice could be given.

● *Prayer That "Works"*

There is a right way to pray. This right way is quite independent of any scholarly discussion of the philosophy of prayer. Many a humble saint who knows nothing about the philosophical problems involved in prayer, knows how to pray. The business of the preacher is to teach his people *how* to pray—how to develop an attitude of mind and heart that will make prayer the spontaneous outpouring of the spirit in the presence of the living God. The best argument that prayer works is to give the people a way to make it work.

Every prayer that ever lifts a human soul up into the presence of the living God must begin with right concepts of God, right mental attitudes toward God, right mental methods in prayer. The Christian preacher is not a spiritual leader until he is able to explain to his people which concepts, attitudes and methods are right.

Psychology has brought up reinforcements to the earnest pastor who is attempting to solve this problem. It has, likewise, made invaluable suggestions in the matter of technique. Every successful pastor-preacher is an actual psychiatrist. Any preacher ought to be informed on the general technique in use by approved scientific practitioners.

● *Psychology and the Spiritual Life*

Dr. James Gordon Gilkey, in his several volumes on practical psychology, has made a great contribution to the whole problem of a spiritual technique. There is great need for a considerable literature in this field, written in a style that humble and unschooled people may understand. There is a right way by which people may exercise faith in lifting themselves out of despair, melancholy, mental depressions, ugly moods, irritability and loneliness. It does little good to exhort people to "have faith." We must prepare to show them *how* to have faith.

Though we speak with the tongues of men and of angels on the subject of civic reform and economic readjustment, and though we are experts in social problems and political issues, and though we are able to discuss learnedly in theology or sacred art, and have not help to give to those who are struggling against a sense of defeat and futility, we are already little more than sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.

Quotable Verse

Invincible

THE years race by on padded feet—
Unhaltingly, and panther-fleet—
Imprinting marks of drab decay.

My hair grows ashen; cravings numb;
Lips pale; and telltale age-lines come—
Life's hoary touch I may not stay.

Time-scarred . . . yet I shall scorn to weep
For transient youth if I can keep
My piquant heart from turning gray!

WINNIE LYNCH ROCKETT.

The Lost Key

THE key of yesterday
I threw away;
And now, too late,
Before tomorrow's fast-closed gate
Helpless I stand—in vain to pray!
In vain to sorrow!
Only the key of yesterday
Unlocks tomorrow.

PRISCILLA LEONARD.

Recompense

ALL that we say returns,
The bitter word or sweet;
Days, weeks, or years may intervene,
But soon or late
The spoken word and speaker meet.

All that we do returns:
The deed that's true or base
We may forget, but all unseen
And parallel
The doer and the deed keep pace.

JOHN RICHARD MORELAND.

Soul Growth

REBELLIOUS heart, in the grip of fate,
Have patience, wait!
Calm you and hark to the great wind's blowing,
Bearing winged seed to your hands for the sowing.
Drive deep the plow of sorrow and pain,
Turn up rich soil for the golden grain,
Spare not the tears: they are needed as rain;
Too long, too long has the field lain fallow,
Now well prepared and no longer shallow.
Please God, a soul is growing!

ANNERIKA FRIES.

Look Up

LOOK up and not down.
Look forward and not back.
Look out and not in.
Lend a hand.

EDWARD EVERETT HALE.

Opportunity

IN an old city by the storied shores,
Where the bright summit of Olympus soars,
A cryptic statue mounted toward the light—
Heel-winged, tip-toed, and poised for instant flight.
"O statue, tell your name," a traveler cried;
And solemnly the marble lips replied:
"Men call me Opportunity. I lift
My winged feet from earth to show how swift
My flight, how short my stay—
How Fate is ever waiting on the way."

"But why that tossing ringlet on your brow?"
"That men may seize me any moment: *Now,*
Now is my other name; today my date;
O traveler, tomorrow is too late!"

EDWIN MARKHAM.

• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

Soon after his ordination in the Baptist ministry, in 1908, Rev. Albert W. Beaven became pastor of the Lake Avenue church, Rochester, N. Y. In 1929 he was called from this ministry to assume the presidency of Colgate-Rochester seminary, from which he had graduated in 1909. Dr. Beaven's sermon in this issue is the baccalaureate sermon preached by him before the graduating class of the Colgate-Rochester seminary last May.

A native of Ireland, Rev Alfred E. Cooke came to Canada in 1901, and studied in Manitoba college, Winnipeg. Graduating in theology at the Congregational college in Montreal, he was for a time pastor in Stratford, Ont., then for eight years ministered at First Congregational church, Vancouver, B. C. Since 1927 Dr. Cooke has been pastor of the Boulevard Congregational church in Denver, Colo.

From 1925 to 1932 Rev. William H. Boddy ministered in Chicago—at the Woodlawn Presbyterian and First Presbyterian churches. His present field is Westminster Presbyterian church, Minneapolis. Earlier pastorates were at Spokane, Wash., and at Portland and Hood River, Ore.

Since 1927 Rev. Albert D. Belden *has* ministered at the famous Whitefield's Central Mission church, Tottenham Court road, London. His earlier pastorates were at Banbury and Westcliff-on-Sea; his ministry at Westcliff covered a period of more than fifteen years.

During the world war Dr. Fred Eastman was the business manager of the Red Cross Magazine. Then he became a Home Mission board secretary, and a little later managing editor of Christian Work. For several years Dr. Eastman has been professor of biographies, drama and literature at Chicago Theological seminary. He is a contributing editor to The Christian Century. Dr. Eastman has won wide fame for his service in the interest of better movies.

Returning in 1926 from China, where he taught in the National Normal university at Peking, Rev. Allan A. Hunter became pastor of Mt. Hollywood Community church (Congregational affiliation) at Los Angeles, where he still ministers.

Following pastorates in Brooklyn, Baltimore and other churches, Rev. Lynn Harold Hough went to Garrett Biblical seminary as professor of the history of theology and later served for a brief period as president of Northwestern university. Returning to the ministry Dr. Hough held pastorates in Detroit and Montreal. Since 1930 he has been professor of homiletics and comprehensive scholarship at Drew Theological seminary, and during the past three years has also served as dean of the seminary.

Dr. Arthur C. McGiffert, Jr., *is* professor of Christian theology at Chicago Theological seminary.

Rev. Roy C. Smith *is minister of the* First Methodist church in Los Angeles.

TITLES AND TEXTS — What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

Charles W. Tyrrell, Primitive Methodist, Benton, Wis. "Tremendous Trifles." Exod. 4:2—"What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod."

Reuben A. Stauss, First Evangelical, Elkhart, Ind. "The Superlative Religion." Matt. 5:20—"Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven."

Eldon A. Ramige, Congregational, Oakland, Ia. "The Speedometer of Character." James 1:19—"Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."

Ralph H. Read, Hollis Avenue Congregational, Bellaire, L. I. "The Power and the Glory." Matt. 5:5—"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

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Title of sermon

.....

Text used (write out the text)

.....

Name of minister

.....

Name of church

.....

Address

Ralph W. Sockman, Christ church (Methodist), New York. "Does God Guide?" Hosea 11:4—"I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love."

Alfred Lee Wilson, Kenwood church, (interdominational), Chicago. "Unrecognized Faith." Matthew 8:10—"Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith; no, not in Israel."

William P. Merrill, Brick church, New York. "What and Where is God?" Exod. 3:4-6—"And God called to him out of the midst of the bush . . . and said, Put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground . . . I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."

W. Franklin Harkey, Third Presbyterian, Washington, Pa. "The Mirage of Tomorrow." Isa. 56:12—"Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, a day great beyond measure."

George O. Taylor, First Christian, Savannah, Ga. "Can We Save Jesus?" Matt. 27:42—"He saved others; himself he cannot save."

J. A. Goodrich, First Congregational, Groton, N. Y. "The Witness of Experience." Luke 8:39—"Return to thy house and declare how great things God hath done for thee."

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

The Event of the Month

IT IS DOUBTFUL whether the pages of English history exhibit a more humiliating spectacle than that which took place in the house of commons when the prime minister confessed an "error of judgment" in approving the scheme for rewarding Mussolini's aggression in Ethiopia by giving him nearly one-half the territory of that country and economic control over a large part of the remainder. It was not merely the confession of a mistake, but the flimsy and incredible explanation of the circumstances, which make the matter so bad. Mr. Baldwin was trying to keep his government in power and this he could not do by defending either his foreign secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, or the so-called "peace plan" which was in reality a plan of abject surrender to Italy. He had therefore to account with some degree of plausibility for his falling into the "error." His explanation was that the increase of the league sanctions against Italy would surely plunge Europe into war. Therefore a quick peace in Ethiopia on any basis was desirable; and the deal was made by Sir Samuel in Paris so suddenly that nothing was left to the cabinet but to support the minister and approve the scheme, which it did. The explanation is flimsy. But the scheme is now discarded, Hoare is out, Eden is in, the country has given clear evidence of a desire that the government take a strong position against Italy, the call has gone forth for other league members particularly those bordering the Mediterranean to mobilize their forces in readiness to defend Britain if Italy attacks her navy, and the committee on sanctions is considering the next step.

Britain Reasserts Sanctions Policy

The Book of the Month

FRONTIERS OF CHRISTIAN THINKING, *by Frederick C. Grant. Willett, Clark & Company, $2.00.*

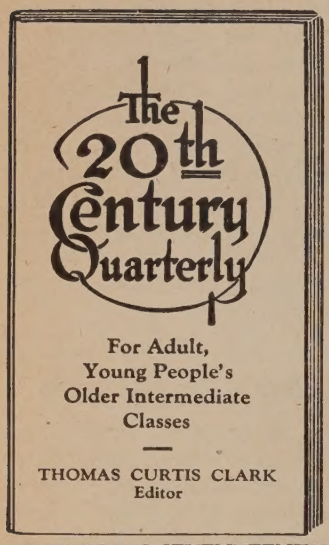
IT IS SOME time since liberal Anglicanism in America has offered a book that came to grips with the ecclesiastical issues which divide the Episcopal communion from the rest of Protestantism. Most Episcopal writing in this country for two decades has reflected the Anglo-catholic position. But President Grant of Seabury-Western Theological Seminary writes as a liberal, and as one who regards himself and his church as Protestant rather than Roman, but no less catholic than is the Roman Catholic church itself. It is made plain in his treatment of every "sector" on the "frontier" of Christian thinking that this thinker desires to go as far as he can honestly go in effecting contact with the rest of Protestantism. On the theological sectors he takes a position which is at once scholarly and reverent. It is the ecclesiological sector which will draw particular attention from both the Anglican and the non-Anglican reader. Dr. Grant makes no claim for episcopacy as the form of government of the primitive church. Instead, he sees that the early church was united despite wide variety of external forms and procedures, and that these forms became standardized only after the third century. A telling point is made against the "undue restrictions" with which the administration of the communion has been surrounded in episcopal practice, by contrasting it with the much more free administration of the other great sacrament, holy baptism. His treatment of the historic episcopate is in such generous spirit as to afford a basis for hopeful discussion with non-Episcopal groups. The book raises new hopes and should evoke an equally generous response from non-Anglican groups.

A Thought for the Month

MOST writers who have anything serious to say about modern life leave us with a pretty dark picture in our minds. Some, looking upon it, shrink with pessimistic gloom. Others find in such realism a ground of hope that if one era is dying another era is being born. Some of us are congenital pessimists. Others are incurable optimists. I guess I am an incurable optimist. To me it seems as if we are living just now in a period like that which the New Testament calls the "fullness of the times." As in the Roman period when Christ came, there is disillusionment everywhere. The whole system of western culture has apparently come to a halt, not because it has spent itself, but because it has left Something out which it must get before it can go on. A strange thing is happening in this connection. Many among our best thinkers have become deeply interested in the Middle Ages! We used to call that period the "Dark Ages" and regarded the emergence of western civilization from it as an escape from a shadow world in which Christianity had been held captive for a thousand years. But now men are asking whether in leaving the Middle Ages we did not leave behind something which human society must have if it is to be indeed a *human* society. The analysis of our present predicament reveals the fact that mankind has for four centuries been losing its sense of solidarity, and our study of the social solidarity of the middle ages reveals the fact that it was the Christian religion which bound men of different nationalities and cultures and classes —"the priest, the prince, the thrall"—together in a common life. Protestantism, nationalism, capitalism, democracy and science have tended to break up this unity of mankind. That is what is the matter with us now. We have been preoccupied with interests which have divided us and dehumanized our social order. Competition in business, individualism in democracy, tentativeness in science, war in international relations, and denominationalism in Christianity—these have all pulled us apart. The supreme responsibility of our Christianity is now to pull mankind together!

A World Ready For Religion

Charles Clayton Morrison



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THOMAS CURTIS CLARK
Editor

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These Men Make The 20th Century Quarterly

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ALBERT BUCKNER COE. Minister of the leading church in Congregationalism (First, Oak Park, Chicago). His department, "At Grips With the Lesson."

JOHN R. EWERS. Vital and dynamic minister of the East End Church of Disciples in Pittsburgh. "The Lesson Brought Down to Date" is his department.

ROY L. SMITH. Minister of the First Methodist Church of Los Angeles and widely famed for his syndicated "Sentence Sermons." His department, "Pointers."

STANLEY I. STUBER. Journalist-minded preacher, contributor to many magazines. Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Clifton Springs, N. Y. Mr. Stuber conducts "The Lesson Forum."

HUGH THOMSON KERR. Minister of the Shadyside Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh; preacher to students; former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. Dr. Kerr contributes the "Prayer Thought."

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